

FWP, Region One, CAC Meeting of 9/26/2013

PRESENT: Mike Corkish, Gary Wolfe – Commissioner, Larry Lack, Greg Foley, Roger Diegle, Chuck Hunt, Chancy Jeschke, Mike Rooney, Leo Marnell, Bernie Cassidy, Paul Fielder, Lee Brundin, Bob Lawson, Jim Satterfield, John Fraley, Jim Vashro, Kenny Breidinger, Ryan Kreiner, Dave Landstrom, Jim Williams, Jon Obst, and Martha Abbrescia

Service Award presented to Roger Diegle, who now will shift from an advisor to an alumnus.

John Fraley covers the housekeeping items of the CAC, reviews the Charter and Purpose of CAC, along with expected outcomes, roles & expectations.

Commissioner Gary Wolfe / District 1: Shares background information with the group. Gary is a life- long hunter & angler. He grew up in scouting in New Mexico, was in the Park Service for 4 years in college, and is married to a wonderful woman, named Rita. Gary and his wife love outdoor activities. Professionally, he's a wildlife biologist from Colorado State University, and spent 15 years with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Since 2004, Gary has been the Executive Director of Vital Ground in Missoula, which operates as a land trust that focuses on habitat that is important for grizzly bears.

Chancy Jeschke – How are commissioners picked for the Commission? Gary – I simply put in for it, anytime there is a change in administration, a person can go to the new Governor's website, as they are looking for people to fill boards. I sent in a letter of interest.

Chuck Hunt – Regarding the draft EIS with CSKT & the separation of the two agencies.....what is your stance on this issue based on the EIS that was presented to the people?

Gary – Both entities are trying to work through this and join technical staffs to come up with a new co-management plan. Jim Vashro – gives an update on the process. Chuck notes that there has been insufficient public involvement with the CSKT EIS. Information plan / marketing plan is underway about all the work FWP does for native species. FWP has been criticized by some on this issue, while FWP only has a scientific disagreement.

Greg Foley – what is the department plan if Tribes goes full speed ahead? Jim Satterfield – we'll have to wait & see.

Chancy Jeschke – what kind of fishery is going to be left if all the lake trout are removed?

The letter sent to the tribes wanted more time to look into this and really absorb it. How much more damage are we going to do to this lake?

Kenny Breidinger / Thompson Fall Fisheries Biologist, gives an overview on the Investigation of Suppression of Walleye in Noxon Rapids Reservoir Decision Notice. (See attached).

Gary to Paul Fielder: I'm a strong advocate for native species...however, I'm wondering what you're hearing in the Noxon area...are Walleye a popular fishery. The primary fishery has been a bass fishery, northern pike, & pike minnow.

Greg Foley – asks what if the department found or heard about an illegal plant now....what would FWP do differently? Would FWP follow its own policy? Gary tells about commission item for October meeting about small mouthed bass in Seeley Lake. The commission will take action immediately.

Round Table-

Mike Corkish: 2-day youth deer hunt...there's still a lot of concern about it overlapping archery season as archers do not wear orange and they will be in the woods with kids with guns. John & Jon Obst will work together to get info out to 4 counties.

Larry Lack: MT has huge difference between resident & non-resident hunting fee. His family from other states can't afford to hunt with him. Will FWP address that? Gary – talks about sustainable funding for FWP and that overall funding is currently being looked at. Larry suggests that there is too big of a disparity between resident & nonresident.

Greg Foley – Kudos to the State Parks and the wonderful job they performed again this year. Shares that he has seen more whitetail deer this summer than ever before. FWP has had a lot of bad press this year, i.e., fish kill in the hatchery was unbelievable! Has staff been reduced? Have procedures been put in place so that this sort of oversight does not happen again?

Chuck Hunt: Smith Lake dock is nice.

Chancy Jeschke: People are also looking for shoreline fishing access. Anyplace we can get docks in is really good. (In reference to Smith Lake dock)

Selling items related to native fish is probably only 1% of the volume of sales we do at Snappy's. Explains angler pressure survey, and asks questions about old water code system. He is concerned that not enough effort is being done to recognize the value of non-native fish in the fisheries. Jim Vashro will mail info out regarding this topic.

Mike Rooney: Worked with Mike Hensler & Jim Dunnigan, and they really know the Kootenai! FWP needs to be more aggressive on things they are thinking of doing (DIDYMO study). Also, a lot of road closures that close on Nov 25. Archery hunters have a lot more access to those roads. Since 2000, I have seen an increase on the usage of these roads. When roads are closed, hunters are being concentrated into

smaller areas. Mike Rooney talked to John Fraley and will offer to write a column on fish and wildlife topics in the Western News. . . Grizzly bear litigation....a lot of road closures have been driven by litigation / case law. FWP needs to TRUMPET the good things they are doing.

Leo Marnell: The kid's fishing pond project is a big winner; let's get it up and going as soon as possible. Will CAC members get notices of internal meetings so that we can stay up on the learning curve?

Bernie: There is a Mule deer buck in downtown Libby, and the thought was that this buck would be a problem when the rut came on. Decision was made to kill the deer. There are 5-10 deer per day, every day, killed by vehicles in the Libby area.

Interesting article about how department's are financed and how they are driven by money.

Paul Fielder: Thanks to Commissioner Wolfe for attending this meeting, and we're glad that you're from the west side of the continental divide for the western part of Montana.

There is a ballot initiative for the trappers Initiative #167, to ban all trapping on all public lands in Montana. This initiative would even affect FWP. He urges all to not support this one. He noted that sale of Montana furs netted \$2.7 million. Scientists and wildlife managers support trapping as a valuable management tool.

Lee Brundin: Says there is at least one more state that is concerned about the moose population – Minnesota. This topic could be a good topic for a CAC meeting – Jesse Newby.

Some people are agitated on the state's permit system. Doesn't quite seem like its random when members of the same families also seem to draw something.

Bob Lawson: continued acquisition of property.....why is this happening when FWP can't take care of the properties they currently own?

Jim Williams: The demand for access and lands is a need that we will never meet based on increased desires from the public.

Next meeting is scheduled for: 12/4/13....Jesse Newby will give an overview of the first year of the Montana Moose Study.